

Approach to the Atheistic Mind

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Paper read at the Sixth Annual Meeting of the National Catholic Evidence Conference, Buffalo, N. Y., September 25, 1937.

IT may well be that the atheistic mind is the battleground on which the Catholic Church will wage its final fight for the salvation of the human race. In Apostolic days, the teaching of the Church was opposed by the Jews and the pagans. Later, came the series of heresies within the Church which resulted in the clarification of many of her fundamental dogmas. At the close of the Middle Ages came the so-called Reformation which, like the branch torn from the tree, left an ineradicable scar on the tree and resulted in the death of the branch. That death we are now witnessing in the gradual disintegration of Protestantism.

The old conflicts, therefore, arose out of theological differences among religious groups, the pagans, whose mythology was nevertheless a religion with them; the Jews; the early heretics, such as the Arians and Nestorians; and finally, the great heresy of Protestantism.

The new conflict will be more inclusive, because the opposing parties will be contradictories and, therefore, all-inclusive. On the one side will be the theists and on the other side the atheists. The theists will be composed largely of Catholics, with a sprinkling of the few who still retain religious belief outside the Catholic Church. The atheists will be composed largely of Communists, with the addition of the few who have remained atheists without becoming disciples of Lenin. Perhaps, among the non-Communitic atheists will be the present younger generation of America which is fast becoming thoroughly atheistic, because of its alleged non-religious but actually anti-religious education, but which has not gone Communistic because it wants the comforts of the capitalistic system. One part of the world will believe in God and act on that belief. The other part

will deny God and act decisively on that delusion. As members of the Catholic Evidence Guild, it is part of our task to see if we can change that defiant denial to humble affirmation.

But first, in the true scholastic manner, we must make a distinction. It is a distinction as old as Scholasticism itself, and that is the distinction between the idea and the person, or between atheism and the atheist. As Catholics, we know what is wrong with atheism. We know that its fundamental errors are an exaggerated notion of the value of human reason and a refusal to follow the dictates of that reason, even when exercised within proper limits.

But we do not know what is wrong with the atheist. It may be defective reasoning power; it may be false information; it may be environment; it may be anti-religious education; it may be bad example on the part of careless Catholics; it may be an unintended slight on the part of some clergyman; it may be fear of the hereafter which has resulted in the construction of atheism as a defense mechanism.

Even those who do know what is wrong with the individual atheist are often unable to solve his problem. Because we do not know what is wrong, the solution is for us far more difficult. But before we speak of solutions, let us examine the problem, always bearing in mind that our problem is not atheism, a false system of thought without any unifying principle, but the atheist, a false thinker with the unifying principle of an immortal soul.

The classical definition of an atheist is one who, possessing the use of reason, does not admit the existence of God. Today, however, that definition would describe what is popularly known as an Agnostic, that is, one who asserts that nothing can be known about the existence of God. The accepted meaning of atheist today is one who positively denies the existence of God, and that is the sense in which we shall use the term.

The atheist's credo, therefore, is denial of the existence of God. We all know, however, that atheists do not limit themselves to an attack on the various arguments for the existence of God. Just as they did not become atheists merely because they were dissatisfied with the cosmological or teleological arguments, so they do not confine themselves

to the field of Natural Theology in their objections to the Church. They assault religion at all points. For example, they denounce the Catholic attitude on birth control and assert that birth control, like all other great advances, had its foundations in atheism. They argue against the Catholic position on free will with objections such as this: "If all human beings have free will, why can't a prisoner, by an act of will, free himself of his manacles and walk out through the locked doors of the jail?"

The atheist is a thoroughgoing materialist. It is often difficult to tell whether atheism is the cause or the effect of materialism. Marx, for example, was above all a materialist; his first principle was dialectic materialism and out of that atheism took its source, because Marx knew that atheism was the atmosphere in which materialism had to breathe in order to live. The intellect of man is magnificent in the richness and multitude of its concepts, but no mind is so broad that it can harbor both materialism and God.

The non-Communitistic atheist is a Rationalist with a capital R. He first exalts human reason by attributing to it powers that it could never possess and then debases it, refusing to rely upon the powers that it does possess. To the atheist the only source of knowledge is reason, and by reason he means the external senses and a purely material intellect. Tradition and Revelation do not exist for him.

All atheists regard themselves as humanitarians. They are continually proclaiming the great benefits they have bestowed on mankind. Perhaps the reason is, that after they have stolen a man's hope of eternal happiness, the law of compensation compels them to promise him complete happiness,—or at least a little pleasure,—on this earth.

In teaching or defending his doctrine, the atheist is at a great disadvantage. His position is essentially negative. He will tell you that all religion is false; that the Catholic Church was cruel to heretics; that there is no proof for the existence of God. His argument may be disguised in positive form, as when he says that atheism advances science. In reality, that is nothing but an attempted refutation of the Church's claim that she has fostered the advance of all scientific truth. The atheist is always on the defensive. Imagine for a moment that you are trying to demonstrate to a person that there is no God, and see how quickly your

discourse becomes an attempted refutation of the five arguments for the existence of God.

From the standpoint of Guild work, the atheist has one all-important advantage, and only one. He is interested. The crowd may be listless and dull, but not the atheist. He is not so anxious to hear what you have to say as he is to refute it, but he is nonetheless anxious. He will interrupt if you allow him, he will object, he will ask questions, and, of course, he is never satisfied with the answers. But if it should be difficult to quicken the interest of the crowd, an aggressive atheist will act as a tonic.

Such are the attributes of an atheist; and that brings us to our problem:

What is the best approach to the mind of a person who denies God and opposes all religion, who is a materialist, a Rationalist and a humanitarian, who is forever on the defensive and always interested in what we have to say?

First of all, it must be borne in mind that our ultimate purpose is to make the atheist a Catholic. Our proximate purpose is to instil in him a belief in God, and our most immediate purpose is to explain to him the reasonableness of our religion.

In approaching the atheistic mind there is, of course, no touchstone or panacea. Human beings become atheists for a variety of reasons and there is also a variety of reasons why they become theists. In Stoddard's case, the horrors of the World War brought him back to God, although Rationalism had led him into atheism. There is no sure cure, except God's mercy, so the best we can do is to chart several possible courses that may bring us to our destination.

Should the approach be by way of proof or exposition? Certainly, since the first essential is to obtain good will, formal proof must be carefully avoided. The rhetoricians tell us that the audience should be rendered attentive, benevolent and docile. The atheist who attends a meeting is already attentive. I do not think he can be made docile. But his benevolence can be obtained and if we are to get his good will and to keep it, it would be fatal to tell him that you are going to prove something to him. Even though you do prove it objectively, the atheist may be able to say truthfully that you have not proved it to him. And if you should be so successful as to make him admit to himself that you

have proved your point, it will be a grudging admission, with perhaps a secret resolution to fortify himself further against the conclusion that you want him to draw.

What of informal proof, and what do we mean by it? In the Catholic Evidence Guild of New York, we have used with great success a system evolved by our President, O'Brien Atkinson, and which, for want of a better name, we shall call informal or surreptitious proof. The speaker does not say that he is going to prove anything. In fact, he carefully avoids the word *proof*. He merely informs the audience that he is going to tell them why he, as a Catholic, believes certain things. He then enumerates and explains the reasons for this or that doctrine. The audience is not hostile, at least not to the extent that they are anxious to avoid having something proved to them. If a listener should object that the point has not been proved to his satisfaction, the answer is that the speaker had no intention of doing that; he has merely explained why he, as a Catholic, holds certain beliefs.

Exposition also has its value. By the use of exposition one can cover a wider field and show the application and implications of a doctrine better than by formal or even informal proof.

Our first conclusion, therefore, is carefully to avoid formal proof and to use instead informal proof and exposition.

In approaching the atheistic mind, should one rely on Natural Reason or Revelation, or both? I believe that it should be through both, but with the emphasis on Natural Reason. The atheist objects violently to Revelation. True enough, he also objects to the conclusions that we draw in the field of Natural Reason, but not as violently as he does to Revelation.

The atheist prides himself upon being a humanitarian. In the field of humanitarianism, the atheist and the Catholic can find common ground. There are differences, of course, but the necessary common starting point can be found in the desire of both the atheist and the Catholic to improve the temporal lot of men. At least on that one point, they agree. For that reason, we ought to emphasize the accomplishments of the Church in the field of temporal welfare. To the Communistic atheist, that is an especially

telling point. He is frequently amazed to learn that the Church has condemned the evils of the capitalistic system, and that, as early as the Thirteenth Century, a sharp distinction had been drawn by Saint Thomas Aquinas between the ownership of private property and its use.

I suppose that every Catholic—in fact, every person who professes a belief in God—is convinced that an atheist leads a most unsatisfying and unhappy life, and, indeed, it must be true. So eminent an atheist as Bertrand Russell has said that the atheist's only outlook is despair. One of our strongest appeals to the atheist, therefore, lies in the message of happiness. If we could tell the atheist in such a way that he would believe us, of the satisfaction, the security, the hope, the joy that we derive from our belief in God, it would be a most effective message.

What topics would be of value in making a favorable approach to the atheistic mind? I should say such topics as *The Church and Education*, *The Church and Science*, *The Church and Government*, *The Origins of Our Constitution*, *The Human Soul*, *Immortality*, *Free Will*, *Miracles*, *Lourdes*. Among the topics which would not be advisable in addressing atheists would be *Mysteries*, *The Sacraments*, *The Blessed Virgin*, *Hell*, *Purgatory*, *The External of Worship*, *The Trinity*.

Lastly, a practical problem presents itself. An outdoor audience is never composed exclusively of atheists. There may be some among the listeners, but we are not certain even of that. If it is thought that the meetings are being attended by atheists, the thing to do is to have occasional talks based on the assumption that the audience is atheistic. The assumption may not be far wrong. Moreover, there is no reason why a talk that will appeal to atheists should be wholly uninteresting to other groups.

I conclude, therefore, that the proper approach to the atheistic mind is to be found in exposition and informal proof, with the talk based largely on reason, with emphasis on the temporal achievements of the Catholic Church and with special emphasis on the joy to be derived from a belief in God.

How Many Bad Popes?

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Reprinted from the Examiner (India).

LOOKING over a pile of old correspondents' letters (most answered privately at the time) I have just come on one about "bad popes." A heckler at a Catholic Evidence lecture had asserted that there were fifty, and promised to bring their names next time. The lecturer declared that there were not more than half a dozen. Attached to the letter I found several sheets of notes working out the question in some detail; and though a few bad popes more or less do not make much difference out of a total of 262, still it will be well to get a clear survey of the question in print, so that Catholics may have a ready-made answer available when tackled by non-Catholics on the subject.

The first point is to get a working definition of what can be fairly meant by a bad pope. Naturally we should leave out of count any moral faults committed in earlier life, before he became pope. For as the proverb says: "A reformed rake *may* make the best husband." Attention must be confined to the duration of the Papal office.

Secondly, a pope is a man as well as an official; and something is expected of him on both counts before we would call him a *good* pope. Stated at a minimum, a pope should be at least habitually a decent Christian, allowing for minor defects, and possibly an incidental lapse now and then. He must not be a scandal to the Church through notable failure either in religious or moral practice. Notorious immorality would mean a bad pope, even if his business administration of Church affairs were admirable. Alexander VI (1492-1503) is the standard example of this.

Thirdly, a pope might be a very good man, even a saint and yet be a complete failure in Church management. The classical instance is Celestine V (1294) a Benedictine monk (Peter Morone by name), who was dragged from his cell

and set on the Papal throne by a body of Cardinals, who, finding the Church in a bad way, concluded that holiness rather than cleverness was the thing needed to effect a reform. He managed the business of the Church so badly that they asked him to resign and go back to his cell—which he did with delight. And the first thing his successor did was to annul everything the holy hermit had done and make a fresh start. [The story is graphically told in John Ayscough's novel, *San Celestino*, and the *Catholic Encyclopedia* gives the dry facts in prose.] Celestine's mistakes as pope sprang from his very virtues; and it shows what comes from putting the right man in the wrong place. But we should not call him a bad pope. He was only an incompetent one. A bad pope in this business aspect would be one who administered the Church unjustly and perversely, or criminally neglected to correct flagrant abuses which were capable of correction.

So a given pope could be a good pope in some respects and a bad pope in other respects; and the respects must be distinguished in selecting instances. Finally we must distinguish between ascertained historical facts, and the accusations of enemies which are not supported by evidence.

From the days of Saint Peter down to the year 891 there were about 110 popes, and not a bad pope among them. Seventy-five of them have the title of *Saint* before their names. Of the other thirty-five many were eminent, and all were sufficiently worthy of their calling. Our study is therefore confined to the medieval period of 612 years (between 891 and 1503), during which there were four distinctly bad periods for the Papacy: (1) from 891 to say 1073 (182 years) during most of which Italy and some other countries were in a state of political anarchy; (2) from 1348 to 1378 (thirty years), while the popes were resident in Avignon, and Rome was deserted; (3) from 1378 to 1417 (thirty-nine years), called the Western Schism, when there were two and then three lines of rival claimants to the Papal throne; (4) from say 1453 to 1503, the period of the Renaissance, when pagan culture brought with it pagan worldliness and immorality, which culminated in the disaster of the *Reformation* (1520) and found its final remedy in the Council of Trent (1545-1563). It is within these four periods that we have to search for the bad popes.

THE ANARCHY OF ROME

Italy from the end of the ninth century was the seat of faction and civil discord. The ecclesiastical state was kept in a long and disgraceful servitude by the ambition of rival senators, and especially the Marquis of Tuscany and the Earls of Tusculum. By these petty tyrants the patrimony of Saint Peter was torn to pieces and sacrilegiously usurped. The Popes were not masters in their own capital. Raised by faction or by intrigue they lost their personal respectability; were often insulted, imprisoned or even murdered by the prevailing party. Between 891 and 999 there were thirty-one popes—that is a new pope *on the average* every three years; but many of them reigned only a few months, a few weeks and even a few days, dying violent deaths. It was, one might say, a state of Bolshevism in which neither religion nor morality found place. Something like a semblance of order was introduced by the Emperor Otho in 962. But the radical mischief, which lay in the domination of princes over the Church and bishops, was only put an end to between 1049 and 1073, when the principles of ecclesiastical autonomy and liberty were reestablished by Gregory VII.

In such a condition of things no wonder if some of the Popes were bad; the wonder rather is that any of them should be good. When at the time of the *Reformation* Baronius began to collect historical documents for the compiling of Church history, he drew a frightful picture of the moral depravity of the period, as depicted in the sources. It was only later that there developed a critical discrimination as to the reliability of these sources, some of which, being the work of bitter and vindictive enemies, showed signs of being calumnious and mendacious. Even a quite recent Catholic writer published the statement that "during a century and a half (884-1046) there was hardly one, perhaps not one pope who was an ordinarily good bishop. It is a long story of simoniacal elections, murder and violence of every kind, together with shameless lust." This, writes Father Thurston, is certainly going far beyond the facts which can be proved with any reasonable show of evidence. Even in the worst cases there is much that remains doubtful. Monsignor Mann's investigations have brought him to the

following general conclusion, *viz.*, "that during the period mentioned there were thirty-seven popes; and of these, as regards the lives they led from their accession to the Papacy to their deaths, the impartial verdict of history cannot condemn, as really a disgrace to their sacred calling, more than four." These four include two youths (John XII and Benedict IX) who were thorough ruffians and libertines merely thrust in by their party; Stephen VII, probably the tool of a vengeful queen; and the doubtful case of Sergius III, accused of immoral relations by his enemies, but probably not guilty.

To give definiteness to the general impression thus described I took the trouble to read over the short lives of each of these thirty-seven popes in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*—written by Monsignor Mann himself.

The following is a collection of notes from this reading covering the worst period of seventy-four years (from 891 to 965). By conning them over carefully you will get a view of the whole landscape in perspective, over which the bad or dubious popes will be dotted among the good or passable popes, who form the overwhelming majority. It is a gratifying picture on the whole, in spite of the few details which detract from its beauty. It shows that even in a period of anarchy, the mischief was not due to anything like a general rottenness of the clergy, but rather to the prevalence of worldly ambitions and rivalries among the laity, or to cliques and parties under the leadership of temporal rulers striving against each other for the mastery, and trying to use the Papacy as a tool and catpaw to promote their ends.

THE CATENA

Formosus (891-896). Much caluminated by his enemies, but history gives him a full vindication, both as to personal morality and integrity of administration.

Boniface VI (896). Reigned only fifteen days. Nothing against him.

Stephen VI (VII) (896, 897). Rather as a political tool of his party, he performed the savage act of exhuming the body of Formosus, holding a mock trial over it, in which his election and his pontifical acts were pronounced invalid. The body was then mutilated and thrown into the Tiber.

Stephen next forced those ordained by Formosus to resign their offices. As Stephen himself was strangled shortly after, he can only be judged by this one atrocious act, and as far as this went, was undoubtedly a bad pope, though perhaps not a bad man.

Romanus (897). Pope for four months; "a man of virtue," deposed by a faction.

Theodore II (897). Pope for twenty days. He vindicated the credit of Formosus, and reinstated the clerics deposed by Stephen VI. He was "temperate, chaste and charitable."

John IX (898-900). He officially canceled the condemnation of Formosus and restored the deposed clergy, labored hard to put an end to deeds of violence, and was clearly a good pope.

Benedict IV (900-903). A great and noble character, zealous for the public good.

Leo V (903). Pope for thirty days, when he was cast into prison. "A man of God, of praiseworthy life and holiness."

Christopher (903-904). A usurper, who was soon driven from the throne and perhaps strangled.

Sergius III (904-911). He revived the condemnation of Formosus and his ordinations. Otherwise nothing against him, except that he was accused by bitter adversaries of illicit relations with a woman named Marozia, and even of having murdered his two predecessors—of which there is no evidence.

Anastasius III (911-913). "Reign marked with moderation."

Lando (913, 914). Reigned six months "a worthy man."

John X (914-928). An active and energetic ruler (especially against the Saracens). Put into prison by a faction, and perhaps smothered. Accused by his enemies of illicit connections with Theodora (a relative) but this is judged to be a calumny.

Leo VI (928). Reigned seven months. Nothing against him.

Stephen VII (VIII) (928-931). Nothing known against him.

John XI (931-936). A political puppet but not bad.

Leo VII (936-939). A good pope and a reformer.

Stephen VIII (IX) (939-942). Rather kept under "political control" and had no opportunity to distinguish himself; but nothing against him.

Marinus II (Martin III) (942-946). "In an unassuming manner he worked for reform" and is described as virtuous.

Agapetus II (946-955). "A saintly and resolute pontiff of unsullied name."

John XII (955-964). A coarse and immoral man (then only eighteen years old) under whom the Papal court itself was a hotbed of moral corruption. [He was put in practically under political compulsion.] During his reign the Emperor Otho was crowned (962). He summoned a Synod of fifty bishops, who charged the Pope with sacrilege, simony, perjury, murder, adultery and incest. With imperial consent the Synod deposed John, and elected another pope (Leo VIII). The procedure was of course uncanonical; but John XII died shortly after, and so made way for "the successor."

Leo VIII (963-965): The successor, who was accepted as true pope. Nothing recorded against him.

Here we have a list of nineteen popes, covering a period of seventy-four years. Only two can be called certainly bad popes; four labor under unproved and improbable accusations; three have no record for or against them, and ten have evidence in their favor as decidedly or passably good popes.

Under the management of the Emperor Otho (from 962) there was a gradual improvement in the situation; and within the subsequent period of 111 years [down to Gregory VII (1073) when the domination of the State over the Church was practically abolished] only one pope out of a total of twenty-five has any stigma against him, namely:

Benedict IX (1032-1045). "A disgrace to the chair of Saint Peter." A youth of twenty, simply placed on the throne by his father Alberic. On account of his openly dissolute life a faction drove him from the city and set up an anti-pope; and it became a fight who should hold the throne. It is said, however, with probability that the dissolute youth soon repented and resigned his pontificate, and died in penitence in a monastery.

This closes the dark age period of the tenth century,

which shows the following result: Out of a total of forty-six popes in 182 years: three convicted, four non-proven, thirty-nine acquitted—rather a record in the annals of criminology.

AVIGNON AND WESTERN SCHISM

The mischief here comes from a series of popes taking up their residence at Avignon, under French political influence, while Rome was abandoned and neglected (1305-1378) after which followed a period called the Western Schism, when first one line and then two lines of rival popes came into existence and spent most of their time competing with each other for a following—to the great neglect, obviously, of ecclesiastical government. This gives a list of twelve popes (1305-1417) none of whom were bad popes in point of personal immorality. Two are charged with tolerating all sorts of corruption in their environment; five of nepotism or undue favor of their nephews and other relations; three of being culpably French in their sympathies and policy; two or three of excessive taxation to gather funds to meet the expenses of the Papacy, some of which, however, were legitimate and necessary for the general good, etc. Six out of the twelve were eminently good popes; the rest mostly not absolutely bad popes but somewhat below the mark in the ways indicated.

THE RENAISSANCE PERIOD

The capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 brought refugees to the West, carrying with them what survived in the East of Greek culture. Hence a revival of art and literature on Greek classical lines, and a paganizing of ideals and morals. In this period there were six popes down to 1503, of whom Callixtus III is accused of serious nepotism, Innocent VIII of tolerating widespread corruption around him, and Alexander VI (1492-1503) flagrantly and notoriously immoral in his personal life, and guilty of nepotism, but an eminent ruler and administrator of Church affairs—which, however, did not alleviate the scandal of his personal life. I should say he was out and out the worst bad pope we ever had, because the least pardonable. The widespread laxity of morals around him might offer an excuse for a layman, but no excuse for a priest, still less for a

pope on whom rests responsibility for the whole of Christendom. But thank God he was the last.

From that day to this (a period of 433 years) there have been forty-five popes, many of them thoroughly great, and all of them substantially good.

Summary of results from Saint Peter to the present pope, a grand total of 262:

(1) Canonized Saints	79	}	242
(2) Ranging from eminently good to passable	163		
(3) Faulty in one or other aspects but not grossly bad	13	}	20
(4) Accused of personal immorality but not convicted	4		
(5) Of scandalously bad morals.....	3		
Grand Total	262		

Nationalism, Internationalism and Supernaturalism

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Reprinted from the Interracial Review for November, 1937.

MODERN society is fast approaching crossroads in the field of action. If the efforts to reconstruct a social order that has become chaotic and unsatisfactory, are to be really successful, it will be necessary for leaders in all fields of human endeavor to form a true estimate of values. It is a matter of great importance that the lessons of the past should supply guidance for the future and that an absolute standard be accepted by which we may measure our achievements and plan our course of action.

All that is best in modern civilization has survived from Christian culture and for this reason it is incumbent on every Catholic frequently to recall to mind the fundamental

principles of the Christian philosophy of life in order that he may not be swayed by specious arguments in favor of this or that new theory of readjustment.

At the present time, outside of the well-defined position of the Catholic Church, all efforts at reconstruction explicitly or at least implicitly assume as the final goal to be attained, the brotherhood of some race of men or the brotherhood of some class of men.

It is the object of this article to outline the Catholic viewpoint with regard to these would-be solutions of our societal relationships in order that we may steer clear of the Scylla of an extreme nationalism on the one hand and the Charybdis of a Communistic internationalism on the other.

For the Church, the eternal salvation of each individual is supreme and civilization is Christocentric. All life and human activity revolves around the pivot of the God-man Christ. Taught by Divine Revelation and helped by reason the Church believes that Man has been created to the image and likeness of God; that all other creatures in this world are meant to serve man; that man, in his turn, must serve his Creator here on earth in order to attain his final destiny which is the life beyond. In other words, the end of man is supernatural and ultramundane. Temporal activity is not an end unto itself but a means to an end. Consequently, the final criterion of the value of every human act lies in its conformity with, or discrepancy from, the natural or positive Divine Law.

It is by reason of this insistence on the supernatural and a lack of flexibility in matters pertaining to man's soul that the Church also arrogates to herself the unique distinction of being attacked, often simultaneously, by people who hold contrary views among themselves. The Catholic Church is attacked by some because they assert, she is not national or racial and at the same time by others because they claim that she is a national or racial Church; she is democratic and undemocratic at the same time; she should prevent war and should not interfere in the affairs of States; she must educate and should not educate; she is maligned because she speaks and because she does not speak.

Now, all such criticism comes either from ignorance of the *supranational* and *supernatural* character of the Church's mission or from an avowed or unavowed rejection of the su-

pernatural. And this would seem to be the position of the theories now striving for ascendancy in the civic life of the world.

On the one hand, there is a tendency to raise racial origin to the plane of a deity before whom all other men and creatures should bend the knee in worship and reverence, the "idolatrous cult of race" in the words of Pope Pius XI. This is the theory which I refer to as *Nationalism*. Of course, so long as it is limited merely to mean all persons in a given territory and acknowledging the same sovereignty, it does not come into necessary conflict with the doctrine of the supernatural end of man which the Church teaches and defends. Indeed, Christian ethics consider that man is by nature a social animal and ordained by God to live in civil society. Time and again, the Church has found it expedient to reiterate this truth and defend it from attacks of one kind or another, and Encyclicals such as *Humanum genus* and *Immortale Dei* of Pope Leo XIII stated with clearness and definiteness the need for society and its proper functions. Obedience and respect for lawfully constituted authority carries with them a moral obligation that cannot be discarded without the guilt of sin. The enactments of the State for the welfare of the whole community can create in the individual duties which bind in conscience.

Nevertheless, the supernaturalism of the Church does not require any one particular atmosphere of social organization in which to exist. While the Church is a perfect and visible society, she differs notably from all civil forms of government in that she is directly concerned with the individual soul and only through the individual with the common well-being. Each individual soul is of infinite value and every man has a personal responsibility to cultivate and prepare his soul for its supreme destiny which is the Beatific Vision. The Church bases her "Bill of Rights" of the essential equality of all men on the common origin and the common end of all mankind. This is why her estimate of the success or failure of an individual is not derived from his social or racial origin or from the degree of his material prosperity but rather from the degree to which he reflects the divine image engraven in himself. Thus, she canonizes the noble and the plebian, the rich and the poor, the Caucasian, the Negro, the Mongolian.

It is especially in this connection that nationalism or racialism is likely to run counter to the Christian ideal. As usually understood and acted upon nowadays, nationalism lays stress upon common territorial, cultural or political origin or upon community of language; racialism is used of an ethnic group possessing affinity of blood or of biological descent. Leaving aside all discussion of the lack of scientific basis for racial purity, at least in the Western Hemisphere, it is evident that such an acceptance of the term must lead to a negation of the common fatherhood of God and the correlative brotherhood of man. It is not a cause of special wonder therefore, to find exponents of this theory making every effort to relegate Christianity to the category of an outworn myth. The individual Catholic who finds himself in an atmosphere where such an attitude of mind is fashionable can inoculate himself from all infections only by developing a reflex consciousness of the supranational and supernatural nature of his Faith. He must dwell frequently and persistently on the second term of the conceptual relationship implied when we speak of God as "Our Father"—namely on the essential unity of the human family.

Somewhat different in its form of expression and perhaps more openly hostile to the supernatural, is the second contender for hegemony in the modern world. I have elected to label this other opponent of spiritual values: *Internationalism*. In its purely economic and political aspect it is more commonly known as Communism. But as a rival system to the Nationalism mentioned in the preceding paragraph, it goes beyond the limits of race, language or territory and extends its appeal to groups differing widely as regards geographical situation, and racial and linguistic affinity. By means of a social revolution of the "workers" of the world, it hopes to bring about an international dictatorship of the "proletariat." It is not to our purpose to enter into a detailed study of the many ethical errors contained in the program of the Third International. Moreover, much of what has been said with reference to the underlying postulates of Nationalism is also applicable to this equally dangerous enemy of true human welfare. In fact, Nationalism and Internationalism although they consider themselves directly opposed to each other and proceeding in opposite directions, are really not moving along parallel lines but on the circum-

ference of the same circle of materialism and will eventually meet. Between the brotherhood of blood and the brotherhood of work there is a difference of kind, not of substance. Both are lacking in true universality of outlook.

The internationalism of the Communist offers no contribution towards the betterment of human relationship even in the purely material order. Viewed in the light of man's supernatural destiny it is positively obnoxious. In the Catholic philosophy of life, man is not solely an economic animal; he is social, political, religious. Economic production is not the final scope of his existence but only one of his many complex activities. Man's material activity must be subordinated to his supernatural end. This does not mean that the Church has no interest in the temporal well-being of her children. She is deeply concerned with this well-being, as related to man's supernatural destiny. Her charitable institutions of the present-day are practical testimonies of her constant interest in the poor and suffering; the guilds which flourished under her ægis in the Ages of Faith are silent witnesses of her material concern; and Encyclicals like the *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII and *Quadragesimo Anno* of the present Pontiff, Pope Pius XI, point the way towards the reconstruction of society in the material as well as in the spiritual order. For the ultimate solution of our social, economic and political problems is to be found not in the exaltation of race, blood or economic status but in the application to temporal needs and duties of the basic truth that our souls have been created for God and that we shall ever remain restless until we find rest in Him.

The Catholic Mind

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